

Tree planting ceremony scheduled for Astronaut Conrad

JSC will commemorate the life of Astronaut Charles P. (Pete) Conrad by planting a Live Oak tree in his honor. The ceremony is planned for November 9.

JSC civil service and contractor employees are invited to attend the ceremony, which begins at 11 a.m. in the Memorial Grove adjacent to Bldg. 111. Employees are encouraged to ride the JSC shuttle bus (route A) to the site as there is no nearby parking.

Conrad became the third person to step on the Moon during the Apollo 12 mission November 19, 1969. Conrad also flew on two Gemini missions, Gemini 5 and 11, and commanded the first crew to live and work on America's first space station, Skylab.

Conrad died July 8, 1999, at age 69. ■



Contract renewed for federal workers

Officials from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and Center Director George Abbey recently approved and signed a major update to the center's contract with AFGE.

According to Bob Hall, JSC's Labor and Employee Relations Officer, the AFGE Local 2284 has represented JSC's non-supervisory civil service employees in Houston since the early 1970s.

"The current agreement, a three-year auto-renewable contract, was last negotiated in 1988 and has been serving the parties well," said Hall. "The current

updating was accomplished primarily to incorporate a number of significant changes in laws, regulations, and policies that have occurred over the past 12 years."

AFGE Executive Vice-President Bridget Broussard-Guidry, JSC Deputy Director Bill Parsons, JSC Director of Human Resources Greg Hayes and Hall were also on hand for the contract signing ceremony.

The updated Agreement will be available electronically on JSC's Human Resources Web site at <http://jscpeople.jsc.nasa.gov>.



NASA JSC 2000e26623Photo by James Blair

Mary McLain, president, American Federation of Government Employees (Local 2284), signs her name to the newly updated JSC/AFGE contract in a ceremony October 13 as Center Director George Abbey looks on.

Safety Viewpoint...

Staged tram accident helps emergency team prepare

By Mary Peterson

"To the unaware person, things did look bad," said Jim Ruszkowski, manager of the JSC Emergency Operations Center. "But, what they were seeing actually had its roots in employee and visitor safety," he explained. "Each year, the JSC Emergency Operations Center Office conducts a training exercise with Space Center Houston to make sure that first and emergency responders from JSC and personnel from SCH are prepared to work together as a team and respond quickly to an emergency. This year's 'event' was a simulated tram accident."

Last year's staged chaos was a pretend-fire in Bldg. 30S from which trapped visitors were rescued.

Now, with four years of similar training, the EOC feels better prepared than ever to meet the demands of a crisis.

Much to their credit as well, the managers at Space Center Houston are very proactive in making sure their employees are trained to handle emergencies and are prepared to integrate into the JSC emergency response process. Shared training, such as the tram scenario, has been key to ensuring a smooth-functioning response between both EOC and SCH teams.

Will we see more scary incidents such as the tram scene? Very possibly. This is just one of several exercises that employees could happen upon as they go about their work, whether at JSC, the Sonny Carter Training Facility, or Ellington Field, as emergency response personnel are being trained. And, the very sight of it should make us all feel better.



NASA JSC Photo from video taken by Jim Hansen

J.B. Williamson, left, a fire protection specialist with SAIC, and Paramedic Melodie Stahl, right, Kelsey-Seybold, go all out for a mock tram accident, and practice their emergency response procedures on an SCH visitor volunteer. The drills are a valuable tool in responding to on-site emergencies.

works as intended if something happens in their area," said Ruszkowski, "and a planned exercise is the best way to learn. More important, being prepared will mitigate fear and panic when the real thing happens, and those emotions, if uncontrolled, can defeat the best-intentioned rescue effort." ■

For more information about the JSC emergency response training program or to request that an exercise be scheduled in your area, contact Ruszkowski at x38133.

Major exercises in the past have included rescuing injured persons from a confined space, responding to chemical releases, averting bomb threats, and attending to divers with medical problems. Less complex exercises have included persons who suddenly collapse to the ground for an unknown medical condition, persons who need help but cannot speak English, and calls from people who are hearing-impaired.

Believing strongly that knowledge should be shared, the EOC office is continually looking for opportunities to test other aspects of its emergency response program. All employees and managers are encouraged to look at their areas should they have a procedure that directs people to call 33333. To make sure their organization can execute the procedure, they should contact the EOC Office for help with developing a training exercise.

"Employees may not know who responds or whether their facility emergency action plan